

## READERS' FORUM

Santa Barbara, Calif.,  
January 28, 1927.

Dear Editor: I enclose a copy of the protest which I, as president of the American Association for Medical Progress, Santa Barbara County branch, have made against the Heisinger anti-evolution bill.

You will undoubtedly agree with me that any restrictions placed upon the teaching of biology in our schools may very well have an adverse effect upon the broader knowledge of such a subject with which our future medical students should be equipped. I would suggest that, if you have not already planned to do so, you make a similar protest on behalf of the State Medical Society to Mr. W. M. Byrne, chairman, Committee on Education of the Assembly. Also let us have one of your vigorous editorials on the subject in your journal, hoping thereby to stir the physicians of the state, many of whom are on school boards, to protest. I would also appreciate it if you could give some publicity to my protest as president of the American Association for Medical Progress. If we bestir ourselves the bill can be killed in committee as was done in Alabama last week.

Sincerely yours,  
GEORGE E. COLEMAN, *President*.

P. S.—Sessions of the committees are held during the thirty day recess which began January 21. A brief of protest by the Science League of America, Inc., has already been sent.

Santa Barbara, Calif.,  
January 28, 1927.

Mr. W. M. Byrne, Chairman,  
Committee on Education of the Assembly,  
Sacramento, Calif.

Re: The Heisinger Anti-Evolution Bill

Dear Sir: The American Association for Medical Progress was organized to aid in safeguarding the public health. As a means to that end it is primarily occupied with the dissemination among laymen of elementary medical knowledge, authentic and reliable and more particularly that gained by experimental research.

A complete understanding of this knowledge and appreciation of the necessity for the preventive measures against disease which are founded upon it can be acquired readily only by those whose minds have been prepared by the unrestricted comparative study, during their school years, of the anatomical, physiological and other biological relationships which exist between man and the lower animals.

The belief is practically unanimous among those who specialize in and teach the biological sciences that man arose successively from lower forms and that his ancestry logically must be placed in that animal kingdom. Whether this truth is self-evident or not can be judged only by those most competent to weigh the incontrovertible evidence in favor of it and these are the science teachers in our schools and universities.

No restrictions should be placed by the laws of our state upon the exposition by teachers to students of all the data accumulated by scientists and the obvious conclusions to be drawn therefrom. The anti-evolution bill proposed by Assemblyman Heisinger distinctly places such restrictions upon the teaching of biology.

As president of the American Association for Medical Progress, Santa Barbara County branch, I wish to register my vigorous protest against the favorable consideration by your committee of this bill or any modification thereof which would prohibit absolute freedom in the teaching of science.

Yours respectfully,  
(Signed) GEORGE E. COLEMAN, *President*.

Pacific Grove, Calif.,  
January 30, 1927.

To the Editor: I thought you might be interested in knowing that the State Board of Education has caused to

be deleted from public school textbooks on physiology a passage stating that disease is real, and that physical as well as mental measures should be taken for its cure.

This was done, of course, at the instance of Christian Scientists, and my authority is the latest annual report of the Science League of America, whose headquarters is at 509 Gillette Building, 830 Market Street, San Francisco.

A letter which I wrote to the Board of Education asking them if it could be true that they had so stultified themselves was not answered.

It seems to me that something should be done about this, or the Board of Education may go still further, and, as I have three children attending public school, I do not take kindly to such damned nonsense.

Vallejo, Calif.,  
February 12, 1927.

Dear Editor: Permit me to congratulate you upon the two editorials of the last issue of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE: "Who are the Indigent" and "The Proposed Government Monopoly of Industrial Medicine." These editorials are convincing and are worth the price of a year's subscription in themselves. Let's hear the rest!

ROBERT B. DEMPSEY, M. D.

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**Heliotherapy in Relation to Treatment of Tuberculosis of Spine in Children**—Ralph K. Ghormley, Boston (*Journal A. M. A.*), records his observations of sixty-three cases of tuberculosis of the spine at the New England Peabody Home for Crippled Children in Newton Center, Massachusetts. Of the sixty-three patients, for the most part children under 10 years of age, all but four had the onset of the disease before the age of 6 years, and in forty-three of the remaining fifty-nine cases, the disease began before 3 years of age. The value of the weight chart as a guide to treatment is emphasized. The climate of New England and particularly that part around Boston is at times not mild. The yearly average percentage of possible sunshine is 57. During the months of November, December and January, about 48 per cent of possible hours of sunshine are available. From June through September there is about 63 per cent. There is a definite tendency toward a general loss in weight during the winter months, while during the summer months a marked rise occurs. Artificial light of the mercury vapor quartz type is now used as a substitute for sunlight on cloudy and cold days. So far, experience has not shown any striking results from this form of therapy. It seems to have a definite tonic effect in some cases and produces a distinct pigmentation. Calcification, both in the spine and in the abscesses not drained, represents a more striking change than is seen in cases treated without heliotherapy. Whether there is a specific action of the sunlight toward this in tuberculosis has not been proved. In a case cited the roentgen-ray examination showed calcification throughout the lesion and gradual diminution in the size of the psoas abscess with calcification. At autopsy the spine and psoas abscess were removed. These have been sectioned and thoroughly studied. Nowhere, either in the spine or in the walls of the abscess, is there any evidence of active tuberculosis. There is healing by fibrosis, and the marrow spaces of the involved vertebrae show only the normal cellular constituents of vertebrae in a child of that age. The contents of the calcified abscess were not hard, but were of the consistency and appearance of wet chalk. The spine on gross examination was firm and solidly fused over the diseased area. Ghormley feels that this case furnishes definite proof that the disease in the spine may be healed by heliotherapy. Success in improving deformity depends on the localization and particularly the extent and duration of the disease, and early diagnosis followed by adequate treatment under constant observation will result in healing with slight, if any, deformity. Though the advantages of heliotherapy are well known, the calcification in the lesion and in the abscesses is an important change, and the altered reaction of the tissues through allergy may be better sustained under heliotherapy and thus healing favored.